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ing at all. The sad case of the small tradesman crowded into bankruptcy by the department stores lies at Mr. Wells's heart for good and sufficient reasons, doubtless, but it has not yet been written. Mr. Polly would have failed, more or less, anywhere, at any time, except perhaps on a Pacific island before the white man came. There seems small profit in being sorry for him over 318 pages. The tragedy of mean people of the stuff that classical comedy is cut from can indeed be written, but only by a man big enough to laugh at their meanness and pierce below it to squeeze his little piece of human nature (as a great critic once put it) until it grimaces or bleeds. Not the surface and sentiment, but essential humanity and cosmical irony, is wanted to write the history of our own times. "Tono-Bungay" had the virtue of setting down a period whole and complete as a picture of Degas or a novel of de Goncourt's, and it had the greater virtue of vibrating for a moment to the great current of contemporary life. But "Mr. Polly," when he has done whimpering, is become impossible and — which is worse — incredible.

This is a very different book from "The Inner Shrine" with its fashionable New York and American-French society. This one is full of the breath of the woods and the clear air that blows across lakes. It plays in the Adirondacks, the Argentine Republic and New York.

Some novels are studies of life made with deliberate intent "to warn, to comfort and command." They show up Life, contract its rhythm till we see causes begetting effects and effects working out again into new causes. There is another kind of novel more distantly related to life written to amuse us, to lead us into more fanciful paths when reality by its dulness and slowness threatens to bore us; and it is to this latter class that "The Wild Olive"* belongs.

Once again this author gives us a very brave and very able heroine. His women are so capable, so high-minded and gallant-hearted, that they incline to throw the men somewhat in the shade, and Miriam, the heroine, in this volume, proud of the savage taint in her blood, is no exception to the rule.

* "The Wild Olive." By the author of "The Inner Shrine." New York: Harper & Brothers, 1910.

If the humor with which Miss Jarrott is drawn is occasionally a little overdone, the gentle irony with which the typical man's woman is done in *Evie* is delightful. If a woman had drawn her we should call it malicious jealousy. She is the perfect egoist, worldly and canny under a mask of absolute innocence and she has a practised hand at making her impulses seem to be the demands of duty.

The plot is complicated, elaborately worked out and too good to be divulged in a review.

Mrs. Henry de la Pasture fills a place in this year of grace that a decade ago belonged to Miss Rosa Nouchette Carey and a quarter century ago to an infinitely finer figure than either of them, Miss Yonge. You can safely give her books to any girl, and yet they will interest, for they deal with love, courtship and marriage. They are the more wholesome for the young girl because they deal with other matters as well—with anxieties of middle life, with the relation of mothers to sons and daughters outside the nursery, where the interest lies in the riper life and the maturer character. The filial tie, the responsible figure—these are good motives. In "*The Tyrant*"* the story opens with a situation that the new world and the new century have not yet abolished—a husband who is a bully and a wife who is afraid. But it all works out uncommonly easy and well; a deed falls out of a box, money flows, the husband is sent off and finally killed off, every one finds a suitable mate. The most improbable is that the scared mouse of a wife finds courage for something not far from blackmail. Yet how sweet are the gardens, the flower scents, the still air as of August afternoons! How gentle the old women, how flower-like the girls! If life were like that, how easy would life be, and how fair!

"*Trespass*"† is a refreshment to the weary soul. Here is meat at last after too much sweet stuff. Here is serious writing, and it is a gallant book. The little innkeeper, with his passionate virtues and his stunted inches, catches the sympathy at the

* "*The Tyrant*." By Mrs. Henry de la Pasture. New York: E. P. Dutton & Co., 1910.

† "*Trespass*." By Mrs. Henry Dudeney. Boston: Small, Maynard & Co., 1909.